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Item 15 of the provisional agenda

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Economic and social relations between indigenous peoples and States

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution 1991/31 of 29 August 1991, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities made a number of recommendations in connection with the economic and social relations between indigenous peoples and States. The resolution welcomed the report of the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations on transnational investments and operations on the lands of indigenous peoples (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/49) and encouraged indigenous peoples' organizations to participate actively in the continuing study. In addition, the resolution requested the World Intellectual Property Organization to formulate recommendations for the effective protection of the intellectual property of indigenous peoples and requested the Secretary-General to prepare a concise report on this question. The Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Ms. Erica-Irene Daes, was invited to provide information to the third and fourth sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as well as to the Conference itself. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to convene the technical conference on practical experience in the realization of sustainable and environmentally sound self-development by indigenous peoples

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with a view to making a contribution to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Developent (UNCED). A request was also made for the circulation of the resolution to the Secretary-General of UNCED and to the administrative heads of each United Nations operational and specialized agency, and for a report on measures taken to implement the resolution to be submitted to the Sub-Commission at its forty-fourth session. The measures taken in connection with the recommendations of the resolution are summarized below.

2. In accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 5(d) the resolution was circulated to indigenous peoples' organizations and all United Nations bodies and specialized agencies referred to in the resolution. A concise report by the Secretary-General on the extent to which indigenous peoples can utilize existing international standards and mechanisms for the protection of their intellectual property, drawing attention to any gaps or obstacles and to possible measures for addressing them is available in document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/30.

3. The Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, Ms. Daes, provided information to the third session of the Preparatory Committee of UNCED held in Geneva in August 1991. The Technical Conference on Indigenous Peoples and the Environment, authorized by the Economic and Social Council in decision 1990/238 of 25 May 1990 and referred to in paragraph 5(b) of the Sub-Commission resolution, was held at Santiago, Chile from 18 to 22 May 1992. The report and background papers are available in documents E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/31 and Add.1. Advance copies of the report in English and Spanish were made available at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.